

## AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

### **Claims 1-7 (canceled)**

**8. (currently amended)**      A cooking implement, comprising:

a hollow sheath, said sheath being closed at a first end and having an opposite female end, said female end opening into an expanded section comprising a larger inside diameter than the remainder of said sheath;

a utensil comprising a utensil end for interacting with a food item and an opposite male portion for inserting into said female end of said sheath;

said expanded section being diametrically and longitudinally sized to snugly receive said male portion in a friction fit and upon joining said male portion to said female end, said sheath forming an elongate handle for grasping by a user to manipulate said utensil end;

said male portion further comprising a rounded end and an opposite end, wherein upon inserting said utensil end into said hollow sheath, said opposite end of said male portion seats within said expanded section with a friction fit to fully enclose said utensil end

within said sheath. ~~The cooking implement as recited in claim 5, wherein said male portion further comprises a rounded end and an opposite end, wherein upon inserting said utensil end into said hollow sheath, said opposite end of said male portion seats within said expanded section with a friction fit to fully enclose said utensil end within said sheath.~~

9. **(currently amended)** The cooking implement as recited in claim 8, wherein said sheath and male portion are cylindrical and said [opposite] closed end of said sheath is rounded identically to said rounded end of said male portion.
10. **(withdrawn)** The cooking implement as recited in claim 2, further comprising said male portion having a threaded outside diameter for threadably engaging with a threaded inside diameter of said female end.
11. **(withdrawn)** The cooking implement as recited in claim 2, wherein said male portion further comprises a pin, said pin engaging with a slot imparted into said female end.

**Claims 12-18 (canceled)**

19. **(withdrawn)** The cooking implement as recited in claim 13, wherein said utensil further comprises means for interchangeably connecting various utensil ends.
20. **(withdrawn)** The cooking implement as recited in claim 19, wherein said means comprises a shaft having a male adaptor and said utensil ends comprise a female adaptor for coupling with said male adaptor.
21. **(withdrawn)** The cooking implement of claim 19, wherein said utensil ends are selected from the group consisting of a spatula, a fish basket and a popcorn cooking pot.
22. **(new)** A cooking implement, comprising:  
a hollow sheath, said sheath being closed at a first end and having an opposite female end;

a utensil comprising a utensil end for interacting with a food item and an opposite male portion for inserting into said female end of said sheath;  
said sheath and male portion being comprised of a heat resistant material; and  
upon joining said male portion and female end, said sheath forming an elongate handle for grasping by a user and manipulating said utensil end.

23. (new) The cooking implement as recited in claim 22, wherein said heat resistant material is a heat resistant plastic.

24. (new) A cooking implement, comprising:

a hollow sheath, said sheath being closed at a first end and having an opposite female end;

a utensil comprising a fork end for interacting with a food item, said fork end tapering into a shaft, said shaft being embedded into a male portion opposite said fork end, said male portion of said utensil being insertable into said female end of said sheath; and  
whereupon joining said male portion and female end, said sheath forming a handle, said sheath being sufficiently elongate to allow a user to safely manipulate food items being cooked in an environment of heat and flames.